

**Frequently Asked Questions**  
Changes to King Mackerel Gillnet Management  
*December 2015*

**What does this rule do?**

- Increases the daily trip limit from 25,000 pounds to 45,000 pounds.
- Adds an accountability measure to reduce the annual catch limit in the year following an overage.
- Modifies electronic reporting requirements for dealers.
- Implements a landings requirement to renew a gillnet permit.

**Why is NOAA Fisheries implementing a landings requirement to renew a gillnet permit?**

- Currently, there are 21 vessels with valid or renewable Federal gillnet permits; 4 of these vessels have had no landings since 2001.
- Some active gillnet fishermen are concerned that permit holders who have not been fishing may begin participating, which could result in increased effort which could shorten an already limited season.
- Requiring a landings history of king mackerel to renew a gillnet permit will help ensure the continued participation of only those permit holders who actively fish or have done so in the more recent past.

**What is the new permit renewal requirement?**

- A king mackerel gillnet permit is renewable only if the vessel associated with the permit landed greater than one pound of king mackerel during any one year between 2006 and 2015.
- NOAA Fisheries will notify each king mackerel gillnet permittee to advise them whether their gillnet permit is eligible for renewal based upon an initial determination of eligibility.

**How can a permit holder appeal if they receive notification that their permit is not renewable?**

- Appeals must be submitted to the National Appeals Office no later than 90 days after the date the initial determination is issued.  
NOAA Fisheries  
National Appeals Office - F/MB7  
1315 East West Highway, Suite 10841  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
- Determinations of appeals will be based on NOAA Fisheries' logbook records, submitted on or before February 16, 2016.
- If logbooks are not available, state landings records that were submitted in compliance with applicable federal and state regulations on or before February 16, 2016, may be used.

### **Why are the dealer reporting requirements changing?**

- Previously, dealers were required to submit an electronic form daily to NOAA Fisheries by 6 a.m. during the gillnet fishing season for purposes of monitoring the annual catch limit.
- Under this system, some landings information did not reach managers until nearly two days after the fish were harvested.
  - Because some vessels land their catch after midnight and may have long offloading times, some gillnet landings were not reported until the following day.
  - Further, the electronic monitoring system involves processing and quality control time before the data can be passed to managers.
- Because the gillnet season is open for a very short time, landings reports are needed on a more timely schedule.

### **What are the new requirements?**

- Dealers are still required to report daily, but by other means established by NOAA Fisheries.
- Beginning in 2016 and continuing until further notice, dealers will fax landings reports to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center by 10 a.m. each day (305-361-4460, Attn: Pam Eyo)
  - Report forms and instructions will be mailed to dealers; if you do not receive a form, you may call 1-305-361-4290 to request one.
- If the reporting method or deadline changes, NOAA Fisheries will provide written notice to king mackerel gillnet dealers and will also post this information on the Southeast Regional Office Web site.
- Dealers must also report gillnet-caught king mackerel in their regular weekly electronic report of all species purchased. This will ensure king mackerel landings are included in the Commercial Landings Monitoring database maintained by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center.

### **Why is NOAA Fisheries increasing the trip limit?**

- The size of a school of king mackerel can be difficult to estimate precisely and king mackerel landed in gillnets experience very high discard mortality, which makes releasing fish in excess of the trip limit wasteful and impractical.
- Fishermen have indicated that more than 90% of successful gillnet deployments yield less than 45,000 pounds of fish.
- Therefore, increasing the current trip limit should reduce the number of trips that result in king mackerel landings in excess of the commercial trip limit and the associated discard mortality.

### **How will NOAA Fisheries prevent landings from exceeding the annual catch limit with this higher trip limit?**

- This rule adds a new accountability measure for the gillnet component of the fishery. Accountability measures are management measures that help keep landings within the catch limit or make adjustments if those levels are exceeded.
- The current accountability measure for the gillnet component of the fishery is to prohibit fishing when the annual catch limit is projected to be met. This measure is not being

removed.

- The new accountability measure requires any overage in one fishing year to be deducted from the annual catch limit in the following fishing year.

**Where can I find more information on management of the coastal migratory pelagics fishery?**

- For more information, please visit  
[http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/gulf\\_sa/cmp/index.html](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_sa/cmp/index.html).